



Providing Guidance for Business Growth for 30 Years

April 14, 2014

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Shark Tank Looking for Veteran Entrepreneurs

Shark Tank, the critically acclaimed, business-themed show is continuing the search for the best Entrepreneurs with the best businesses and products that America has to offer. The Emmy-nominated show features The Sharks – tough, self-made, millionaire/billionaires who give budding entrepreneurs a chance to make their dreams come true and become successful -- and possibly wealthy -- business people.

We are currently looking for Military Veterans with a great product or business in need of an investment for a possible special Veteran's Day episode. Email us at SharkTankCasting@yahoo.com to apply. Be sure to put VETS CASTING in the subject line.

How to Sell Your Product to Retailers – Part I

Illinois SBDC Network – Please see the notice below about a free webinar you might want to check out to see if it would bring value to your retail clients.

"So you have an idea for a product - what's next? How do you convert that idea into actual sales? The process from idea to retail shelf is complicated. There is research to do and decisions to make. Learn from someone well-versed in these complexities.

Join Retailbound on April 23rd at Noon CDT to discover from Yohan Jacob at Retailbound on how to navigate the process of selling to and working with retailers. In this 1 hour webinar, you will learn the secrets of selling to retailers of all shapes and sizes! In the first of a two-part **FREE** Webinar series, you will learn the basic pre-work before contacting retailers.

Yohan Jacob is known internationally as the Retail Coach. A noted author, retail consultant and retail coach, Yohan teaches entrepreneurs, inventors, and small suppliers on how to

stand apart from the competition and get their products sold to retailers and distributors. Visit him online and check out the Retailbound website at www.retailbound.com

To register for this webinar, click the link:

<http://www.anymeeting.com/PIID=EA55DF82814A3C> For more information or registration questions, please contact Kevin Sullivan at 312-933-4381 or sales@retailbound.com

2014 Illinois Governor's Sustainability Awards

The Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC) is now accepting applications for the [2014 Illinois Governor's Sustainability Awards](#)! This award, begun in 1987, is the nation's oldest continuing pollution prevention program and annually honors organizations and businesses that have made a commitment to the environment through outstanding and innovative sustainability practices.

The deadline for submitting applications is close of business May 22, 2014. Applications will only be accepted electronically. Details and application information can be found on our [website](#).

The award ceremony will be held this fall in Chicago, and once again ISTC will host the [Illinois Campus Sustainability Compact Awards Program](#) in conjunction with the Governor's Sustainability Awards program. A technical symposium will take place prior to the awards ceremony, bringing together a forum for education and networking opportunities.

We encourage you to forward this announcement to colleagues that may also be interested in the program. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the award application or assist you in the process. Please don't hesitate to contact Debra Jacobson, Senior Operations Manager, djacobso@illinois.edu or John Mulrow, Business & Industrial Sustainability Specialist, jmulrow@illinois.edu.

Achieving Sourcing Transformation in the Restaurant Industry

By Steve Whitmen on *fsrmagazine.com*, 11/13 - At a time when restaurants' margins are incredibly thin—and consumers continue to spend cautiously—e-sourcing has emerged as an invaluable tool for improving growth and profitability. In the last decade, the technology has helped restaurants' procurement teams uncover double-digit savings in both direct and indirect categories, new process efficiencies, higher procurement contract compliance, and dramatically lower savings leakage—amongst other benefits.

So what is e-sourcing? Also referred to as "e-auctions" or "reverse auctions," e-sourcing is a real-time dynamic negotiation between a host company and a group of pre-qualified suppliers who compete against each other to win the business. The competitive environment established by e-sourcing enables restaurants to discover new sources of supply, mitigate risk, uncover potential new products, and improve margins.

But more importantly, e-sourcing has the potential to transform the role of the procurement team within the restaurant industry. The problem is that, despite the obvious advantages, less than half of all businesses have adopted e-sourcing—and what's more, many restaurants that do leverage the technology aren't realizing its full potential.

More at: <http://www.fsrmagazine.com/restaurant-consulting/achieving-sourcing-transformation-restaurant-industry>

Resource of the Week – Food Safety in Restaurants

The following link covers a wide variety of food safety concerns which could be very helpful to many of your clients. <http://www.restaurant.org/Manage-My-Restaurant/Food-Nutrition/Food-Safety>

Program Success of the Week – Angie's Sugar Buzz Bakery

When Angela Davis heard that her aunt was going to close The Country Market and BP gas station, she immediately started planning how she might keep the Sandwich, IL mainstay open. Angie had a vision for transforming the store from a general country market and bakery to a bakery, confectionary and coffee shop. In two short months, with the help of the Illinois SBDC at Waubensee Community College in Aurora, along with friends and family, she completed her business plan, secured a line of credit, completely remodeled the store, and re-opened as Angie's Sugar Buzz Bakery in January, 2014.

Angie started building the 'buzz' about her business by posting her renovation progress on Facebook, so all could see the makeover in real time. She even held a contest for the new business name on Facebook. She explained, "Sugar Buzz is the perfect name because it not only conveys the 'buzz' customers get from the sweets and coffee, but that we are also a place where customers can connect with the 'buzz' of what's happening in and around Sandwich."

Angie also created quite a 'buzz' in the press with her opening, and continues to draw patrons to the store with her tantalizing Facebook posts of new recipes, product photos and customer comments on everything from caramel apples to scones, cookies, croissants, and old fashioned candies. You can also grab a cup of coffee or cold drink to accompany your sweet treat.

Angie's Sugar Buzz Bakery opened on January 27, in the heart of one of the worst winters on record. However, the nasty weather has not kept patrons away, and Angie has been beating her sales forecast every month from day one.

On opening day, the bad weather closed schools, but did not keep customers from stopping in. The old gas pumps are shut off, and the BP Green is gone, but the pump overhangs provide great sheltered parking when the weather is bad.

Angie has big plans for the business, and is looking forward to spring to hold events, launch new products, and spread the 'buzz'!

You will find Angie's Sugar Buzz Bakery at 1004 E. Church St., Sandwich, IL. You can call them at (815) 786-7774, or find them on [Facebook](#) for regular updates on new products, special offers, and other 'buzz.'

2014 Tibbetts/SBIR Hall of Fame Nominations

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is seeking nominations for its annual Tibbetts and Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Hall of Fame Awards. Many of you regularly work with local Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and/or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) awardees that develop cutting edge technologies. This is an opportunity for you to see to it that the best of these companies are recognized. For additional information on the awards including the nomination process, please visit <http://www.sbir.gov/news/2014-tibbetts-and-hall-fame-award-nominations>. Nominations for these awards are open until May 2, 2014 (11:59 EDT).

Spring National SBIR/STTR Conference, DC

The Spring National SBIR/STTR Conference will take place June 16-18, 201, at the Gaylord Hotel and Convention Center at Washington DC National Harbor:
<http://www.nationalsbirconference.com/> . At this conference, attendees will learn from senior SBIR/STTR leaders and program experts how to participate and compete for funding in each of the government's SBIR/STTR programs, with their increased focus on commercializing technological innovations.

Early bird registration, with its discount, ends April 18: register online at your earliest convenience at <http://www.nationalsbirconference.com/> . The Gaylord Hotel is also offering discounted room rates for SBIR/STTR Conference Attendees; to book online, visit: <http://hwww.nationalinnovationsummit.com/about/venue.html>.

Neoserra Update – Adding a Picture to Your Counselor Record

Utilize the follow link to add your picture to your counselor record.

<http://www.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n207>

America's SBDC Network Connect

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the April 3, 2014 edition of [America's SBDC Network Connect newsletter](#).

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to Tom.Becker@illinois.gov. Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.

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